

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Office Action in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13, 15 and 18-25 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 13 and 24 being independent. Claims 1-12 were previously withdrawn from consideration. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

Claims 13, 15 and 18-25 were rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-16 of U.S. Patent No. 6,830,790 (Misuda et al.) in view of EP 893270 (Kawasaki et al.). This rejection is traversed. Applicants submit that although Kawasaki et al. discloses use of pseudo-boehmite alumina hydrate in the form of plates, Kawasaki et al. fails to teach or suggest use of crystalline aluminum oxide having a plate-like profile, as recited in Claims 13 and 24. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Claims 13-18 and 21-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,511,736 (Asano et al.) in view of Kawasaki et al.. Claims 13, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Asano et al., in view of Kawasaki et al., and further in view of either U.S. Patent No. 6,200,670 (Hosoi et al.) or U.S. Patent No. 5,759,673 (Ikezawa et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as recited in independent Claim 13, is directed to a method of manufacturing a recording medium including a base material and an ink-receiving layer provided on the base material and containing a particulate material. The method includes the

steps of producing a coating layer by applying a coating solution containing the particulate material containing particles of crystalline aluminum oxide having a plate-like profile to the base material followed by drying, applying water to the coating layer to cause swelling and pressing the surface of the swelled coating layer against a heated mirror-surface drum to produce the ink-receiving layer so as to have a specular gloss of the surface thereof not less than 20% as measured at 20°. The particulate material contains particulate aluminum oxide at not less than 70 wt %. The ink-receiving layer contains a binder, and the mixing ratio of the particulate aluminum oxide to the binder is within a range of between 5:1 and 25:1 by weight. The base material includes a fibrous substrate having a surface layer thereon, and the fibrous substrate has a Stöckigt sizing degree of 100 seconds or more. The average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles is not more than 0.3 µm and not less than 80% of the total aluminium oxide particles have a particle diameter of not more than 1.0 µm.

Applicants' invention as recited in Claim 24 is directed to a method of manufacturing an ink jet recording medium including a base material and an ink-receiving layer provided on the base material and containing a particulate material. The method includes applying a coating solution containing the particulate material containing particles of crystalline aluminum oxide having a plate-like profile to the base material followed by drying to form a coating layer. The average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles is not more than 0.3 µm and not less than 80% of the total aluminum oxide particles have a particle diameter of not more than 1.0 µm.

Asano et al. is directed to a recording medium that includes a multi-layered ink fixing layer, formed on a substrate material and composed of an outermost ink fixing layer and

one or more intermediate ink fixing layers. Each of the intermediate ink fixing layers includes a binder and a pigment. The pigment may be silica, aluminosilicate, or alumina and zeolite, and the pigment is in the form of fine particles having a size of 1 μ m or less. As the Examiner acknowledges, however, Asano et al., does not disclose the specular gloss at 20° and is silent as to the shape of the pigment particles. The Examiner has taken the position that the presently claimed gloss would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of the disclosure in Asano et al. of the specular gloss at 75°. Applicants respectfully disagree and submit that there is nothing in Asano et al. that would provide motivation for having a coating layer having a specular gloss of not less than 20% as measured at 20°, as recited in Claim 13. To remedy the deficiency with regard to the shape of the pigment particles, the Examiner cites to Kawasaki et al.

Kawasaki et al. is directed to an ink jet recording sheet and discloses that the ink jet recording sheet includes a support and a porous ink receiving layer containing mainly a pseudo-boehmite alumina hydrate and a binder. Applicants submit, however, that Kawasaki et al. fails to teach or suggest use of particles of crystalline aluminum oxide having a plate-like profile as recited in Claims 13 and 24. Accordingly, Applicants submit that combining the teachings of Asano et al. and Kawasaki et al. in the manner proposed would not produce Applicants' claimed invention.

Hosoi et al. and Ikezawa et al. were cited for their teachings regarding the use of barium sulfate. These patents, however, are not understood to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Asano et al. and Kawasaki et al.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the cited documents, whether taken alone or in combination (assuming a combination is proper) teaches or suggests important features of Applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejections.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 13 and 24. Dependent Claims 15, 18-23 and 25 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in the independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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